



**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

Give eFile a Try - File Documents Electronically from Your PC

It is now possible to file a Motion for Relief From Stay or adversary complaint electronically from your office. This can be accomplished 24 hours a day, seven days a week by using *eFile*, the electronic court document filing system for the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California. *eFile* is a user-friendly system that allows registered users to file documents from their computers using an Internet connection.

The Court currently accepts the following motions via *eFile*: 350PP (Personal Property), 350RP (Real Property) and 350UD (Unlawful Detainer). Complaints can also be filed through *eFile*.

The Court plans to begin a pilot program for electronically filed chapter 7 petitions this summer. If you are interested in participating as a pilot attorney, please contact Jacqueline Diaz at (213) 894-6463.

Advantages of using *eFile* include:

- All Central District bankruptcy judges participate in the Court's *eFile* program.
- *eFile* saves travel time (and money) as registered users no longer need to travel to the Court or send a courier to file the types of documents accepted electronically.
- The *eFile* submission process is fast and the electronic forms are easy to complete.
- All activity on the Court's *eFile* site is secure.
- Electronically filed documents are immediately entered on the Court's docket and an image of the filed document is simultaneously available for viewing in webPACER.
- Applicable filing fees are paid electronically by credit card.

- An *eFile* Support Center is available during business hours (Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) for customer assistance.
- The Court will provide service of entered orders on Motions for Relief filed through *eFile*, alleviating the need for the movant to provide the Court with copies of the order and self-addressed stamped envelopes.
- The summons and notice of status conference are e-mailed back to the moving party for service the same day the complaint is electronically filed. This enables the plaintiff to provide service and subsequently submit the proof of service electronically.
- How do you get started using *eFile*? Any attorney may register with the Court to get access to the *eFile* system. The registration process is completed online in less than ten minutes. To register or learn more about *eFile*, go to <<http://efile.cacb.uscourts.gov>>. Valid credit card information will be required at registration for payment of applicable filing fees incurred for future electronic filings. Give it a try!

The following table displays the basic hardware/software needed to use *eFile*:

Hardware/Software Requirements for eFile	
Item	Requirement
PC	Running Windows 95/98 or higher or Macintosh OS.
Printer	Any printer compatible with your PC.
Scanner	Any scanner compatible with your PC.
Browser	Internet Explorer 4.x and above with SSL enabled.
Exchange Software	The full version of Adobe Acrobat version 5.0 or higher, which contains both Adobe PDF Writer and Adobe Reader.
E-mail Account	An e-mail account that is configured to send and receive attachments. You should be aware of any mailbox size limitations imposed by the e-mail provider.

Local Bankruptcy Rules Changes Take Effect - New Forms Mandatory

A number of changes to the Local Bankruptcy Rules took effect on May 1, 2003. Local Bankruptcy Rules 1002-4, 3015-1, 4008-1, 6004-1, 9013-1, 9020-1, and 9075-1 were all revised. In addition, use of nine new Local Bankruptcy Rules forms became mandatory. Four of the forms pertain to chapter 13 cases, four forms are Reaffirmation Agreement

related; and the final form is a summons for use in ancillary cases. Appendix IV, *Guidelines for Allowance of Attorneys' Fees in Chapter 13 Cases*, was also added to the Rules. For the revised text and redline version of the affected Local Bankruptcy Rules, copies of the revised Local Bankruptcy Rules, and copies of the new mandatory Local Bankruptcy Rules forms,

please refer to the Court's web site at <www.cacb.uscourts.gov> select **Procedures/Rules/Forms, Local Bankruptcy Rules & Forms**. Printed copies of the revised Local Bankruptcy Rules and Local Bankruptcy Rules forms are also available for purchase from the on-site copy service at each division.

Judicial Conference Privacy Policy to Take Effect December 1, 2003

The Judicial Conference of the United States has adopted a policy ("privacy policy") to address the protection of individual privacy in the context of access to electronic case files. The privacy policy and related amendments to the *Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure (F.R.B.P.)* take effect December 1, 2003.

The policy requires that personal identifiers, such as Social Security numbers, financial account numbers, dates of birth, and names of minor children be redacted. It will be the attorney's responsibility to inform his/her clients that case files may be obtained electronically and ensure private information is not included in the case files. **Attorneys and/or debtors will be responsible for redacting personal identifiers.** The Clerk's Office will not be required to review filings for compliance with the policy and will not redact personal identifiers from documents filed with the Court.

Implementation of the policy requires modification to nine of the official bankruptcy forms and many of the Court's forms. Revised forms will be available on the Court's web site prior to December 1, 2003.

Electronic access to court dockets through PACER will not be affected by the policy. Neither will the availability of case files at the Court.

A full copy of the policy entitled the *Report of the Judicial Conference Committee on Court Administration and Case Management on Privacy and Public Access to Electronic Case Files* can be found at <http://www.uscourts.gov/Press_Releases/att81501.pdf>.

More information about the amendments to the *F.R.B.P.* can be found at <<http://www.uscourts.gov/rules/>>.

Additional information about the privacy policy and the impact it will have upon the public will be made available in the future.

Bankruptcy Filings Decrease for the First Five Months of 2003

Through the end of May 2003, bankruptcy case filings have decreased by 8% in the Central District. Case filings have declined in every chapter, with both chapter 11 and chapter 13 filings decreasing by 24%. Chapter 7 filings show the least amount of decrease and have dropped by 4%. However, the Court has experienced an 11% increase in the number of adversary complaints filed during 2003. Divisional filing statistics can be viewed on the Court's web site at <<http://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/>>. Select ***Publications, Bankruptcy Filings***.

Chapter	2002 Filings	2003 Projected Filings	% Change
7	69,228	66,579	(4%)
11	474	359	(24%)
13	13,617	10,319	(24%)
Total	83,319	77,033	(8%)

Judicial Performance Survey Goes Online

The next time you receive an e-mail message from the Court, it may be requesting you to complete an online Judicial Performance Survey. The Court developed its first web-based survey during May 2003 and conducted its first survey for Judge John E. Ryan. A second survey was conducted in June 2003 for Judge Meredith A. Jury. The surveys were sent to attorneys through e-mail using a web-based service that specializes in electronic surveying and data management. The online survey provides those taking the survey with secure, professional, user-friendly screens, and is less time consuming for survey respondents than previously distributed manual surveys. The online survey takes approximately ten minutes to complete.

So far, the average response rate for this online survey has been somewhat higher than prior surveys distributed via traditional mail. The Court plans to distribute future Judicial Performance Surveys for Judges Geraldine Mund, Ernest M. Robles, and Erithe A. Smith. Please respond if you receive a survey; the Court values your feedback.

Bench-Bar Program Provides Information for Participants

Judge Vincent P. Zurzolo initiated an informal bar/bench program in the Los Angeles Division on February 5, 2003. Approximately 60 attorneys, law clerks, and trustees joined Chief Judge Barry Russell, and Judges Alan M. Ahart, Sheri Bluebond, Thomas B. Donovan, Erithe A. Smith, and Ernest M. Robles. The audience was invited to ask questions of the judges regarding their policies and procedures, as well as those of the Clerk's Office. The judges received a variety of questions covering a broad range of topics. The Court appreciates the public feedback received during the program. The questions and judges' responses are posted on the Court's web site at <www.cacb.uscourts.gov> select ***Special Programs, Judicial Programs***.

Law Clerk Sarah Kwak Selected to Receive ADR Award

Sarah Kwak, law clerk to Chief Judge Barry Russell, was selected to receive the Robert F. Peckham Award for Excellence in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) from the United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit. The award was presented to Ms. Kwak at the opening session of the annual Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, June 23-26, 2003.

Ms. Kwak was selected for the award in recognition of her work as the coordinator of the Court's bankruptcy mediation program. Her ADR responsibilities include supervising two full-time staff positions in the Clerk's Office, serving as program liaison to the public and the bar, upgrading program software, and compiling and maintaining all statistical reports. The program, which is the largest bankruptcy mediation program in the nation, enables parties to resolve their disputes without appearing in court; and cases may be resolved more quickly and at a lower cost than that of litigation.

Court's On-Site Photocopying and Related Services Bidding Selection Process Now Open

Vendors interested in providing on-site photocopying of court records and related services to the public may obtain the Request for Proposal (RFP) package by submitting a written or fax request on or before Friday, July 11, 2003 at 3:00 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time to:

United States Bankruptcy Court
Central District of California
300 North Los Angeles Street, Room B-17
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Ramon Quebral
Fax: (213) 894-4960

Requests for RFP packages must be made in writing and may be mailed to the Court or sent by fax. Telephone requests will not be honored.

Sealed bids must be received by 3:00 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time on Friday, August 1, 2003.

There is currently an on-site photocopy service at each of the Court's locations in Los Angeles, Riverside, Santa Ana, San Fernando Valley, and Santa Barbara.

Court News

is published by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California as an informational service for the practitioners and public of our Court.

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Suggestions and comments are always welcome.
Please call (213) 894-3778 or e-mail us at Kathleen_Crosser@cacb.uscourts.gov.